

**CLAIMS:**

I Claim:

1. A sorter/organizer, comprising:

at least three substantially planar walls arranged

5 substantially parallel to one another, said at least three walls including a front wall, a rear wall and at least one dividing wall arranged between said front wall and said rear wall;

side walls connected to said at least three walls, said side walls each having a lower edge substantially coplanar with a  
10 lower edge of said front wall and being arranged to enable a bottom of said compartments to be positioned at varied heights;

a first, stepped bottom wall connected to at least three of said walls and at least one of said side walls such that at least two compartments receivable of objects are formed, said  
15 compartments being staggered in relation to one another, said at least one of said side walls having upper edge portions connected to said first bottom wall; and

ledges extending above said upper edge portions of said side walls and alongside a bottom of a respective one of said  
20 compartments, said ledges extending only partially toward upper edges of said at least three walls such that at least one side of said compartments is open above said ledges, to enable received objects to extend laterally outward of a compartment.

2. The sorter/organizer of claim 1, wherein said first bottom wall includes an arcuate portion and a substantially flat or planar portion forward of said arcuate portion defining the bottom of at least one of said compartments whereby an object contacting said arcuate portion slides forward along said arcuate portion onto said substantially flat or planar portion.

3. The sorter/organizer of claim 1, wherein said first bottom wall includes a plurality of bottom panels arranged at different heights and closure panels connecting adjacent ones of said bottom panels, each of said bottom panels defining a bottom support surface of a respective one of said compartments, said closure panels being substantially parallel to said at least three walls.

4. The sorter/organizer of claim 3, wherein said ledges are arranged alongside said bottom panels.

5. The sorter/organizer of claim 1, wherein said first bottom wall is connected to both of said side walls such that said compartments are defined between said side walls.

6. The sorter/organizer of claim 5, wherein said rear wall includes a compartment-defining portion and support portions each

arranged below said compartment-defining portion and contiguous with a respective one of said side walls, a lower edge of each of said support portions being co-planar with said lower edges of said front wall and said side walls, said compartment-defining  
5 portion having a lower edge staggered or raised with respect to a lower edge of said front wall and an upper edge raised relative to an upper edge of said front wall.

7. The sorter/organizer of claim 5, wherein said at least  
10 one dividing wall includes first and second dividing walls such that a first compartment is defined between said front wall and said first dividing wall, a second compartment is defined between said first dividing wall and said second dividing wall and a  
15 third compartment is defined between said second dividing wall and said rear wall.

8. The sorter/organizer of claim 5, further comprising reinforcing ribs arranged on at least one side of said at least three walls and contiguous with one of said side walls and said  
20 ledges such that said reinforcing ribs have a surface coplanar with an outer surface of said side walls.

9. The sorter/organizer of claim 8, wherein said reinforcing ribs extend inward from each of said at least three

walls toward an opposed one of said at least three walls such that outer edges of said front wall and said rear wall are provided with an L-shaped reinforcing structure and an outer edge of each of said at least one dividing wall is provided with a T-shaped reinforcing structure at said at least one side of said at least three walls.

10. The sorter/organizer of claim 1, wherein said front wall includes first and second spaced-apart front wall portions, said at least one dividing wall comprising a plurality of dividing walls, at least one of said plurality of dividing walls being arranged between each of said front wall portions and said rear wall to thereby define at least one compartment between each of said front wall portions and said rear wall, further comprising:

at least first and second transverse walls extending rearward from inner edges of said front wall portions such that a storage compartment is defined between said transverse walls, said first bottom wall being connected to said first transverse wall, said first front wall portion, said rear wall and a first one of said side walls, said first side wall extending rearward from an outer edge of said first front wall portion; and

a second, stepped bottom wall connected to said second transverse wall, said second front wall portion, said rear wall

and a second one of said side walls, said second side wall extending rearward from an outer edge of said second front wall portion.

5           11. The sorter/organizer of claim 10, wherein said transverse walls are parallel to said side walls.

10           12. The sorter/organizer of claim 10, wherein said transverse walls connect said front wall portions to said rear wall such that said transverse walls and said side walls have substantially the same depth.

15           13. The sorter/organizer of claim 10, further comprising a substantially flat or planar bottom wall arranged between said transverse walls to define a bottom of said storage compartment.

20           14. The sorter/organizer of claim 13, wherein said front wall includes a connecting portion arranged between said first and second front wall portions, said substantially flat or planar bottom wall being connected to said connecting portion of said front wall.

          15. The sorter/organizer of claim 10, wherein said rear wall includes a compartment-defining portion and a support

portion arranged below said compartment-defining portion, said compartment-defining portion having a lower edge staggered or raised with respect to a lower edge of said front wall, a lower edge of said support portion being co-planar with lower edges of said front wall and said side walls.

16. The sorter/organizer of claim 10, wherein each of said first and second bottom walls includes an arcuate portion and a substantially flat or planar portion forward of said arcuate portion defining the bottom of at least one of said compartments whereby an object contacting said arcuate portion slides forward along said arcuate portion onto said substantially flat or planar portion.

17. The sorter/organizer of claim 10, wherein each of said first and second bottom walls includes a plurality of bottom panels arranged at different heights and closure panels connecting adjacent ones of said bottom panels, each of said bottom panels defining a bottom support surface of a respective one of said compartments, said closure panels being substantially parallel to said at least three walls.

18. The sorter/organizer of claim 17, wherein said ledges are arranged alongside said bottom panels.

19. The sorter/organizer of claim 10, further comprising reinforcing ribs arranged on an outer edge of each of said at least three walls and contiguous with one of said side walls and said ledges such that said reinforcing ribs have a surface  
5 substantially coplanar with an outer surface of said side walls.

20. The sorter/organizer of claim 19, wherein said reinforcing ribs extending inward from each of said at least three walls toward an opposed one of said at least three walls  
10 such that outer edges of said front wall and said rear wall are provided with an L-shaped reinforcing structure and outer edges of each of said at least one dividing wall are provided with a T-shaped reinforcing structure.

21. A sorter/organizer, comprising:  
15 a substantially planar front wall including first and second spaced-apart front wall portions;  
a substantially planar rear wall arranged substantially parallel to said front wall;  
20 at least one first dividing wall arranged between said first front wall portion and said rear wall;  
at least one second dividing wall arranged between said second front wall portion and said rear wall;  
a first, stepped bottom wall connected to said first front

wall portion, said at least one first dividing wall and said rear wall such that at least two compartments receivable of objects are formed, said compartments being staggered in relation to one another;

5           a second, stepped bottom wall connected to said second front wall portion, said at least one second dividing wall and said rear wall such that at least two compartments receivable of objects are formed, said compartments being staggered in relation to one another;

10           a first side wall connected to an outer edge of said first front wall portion, an outer edge of said at least one first dividing wall and an outer edge of said rear wall, said first side wall having upper edge portions connected to said first bottom wall, said first side wall having a lower edge  
15 substantially coplanar with a lower edge of said front wall and being arranged to enable a bottom of said compartments defined in part thereby to be positioned at varied heights;

          a second side wall connected to an outer edge of said second front wall portion, an outer edge of said at least one second  
20 dividing wall and an outer edge of said rear wall, said second side wall having upper edge portions connected to said second bottom wall, said second side wall having a lower edge coplanar with said lower edge of said front wall and being arranged to enable a bottom of said compartments defined in part thereby to



be positioned at varied heights;

a first transverse wall connected to said first bottom wall and said first front wall portion and extending rearward from an inner edge of said first front wall portion; and

5 a second transverse wall connected to said second bottom wall and said second front wall portion and extending rearward from an inner edge of said second front wall portion, said second transverse wall being spaced from said first transverse wall to define a storage compartment therebetween.

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22. The sorter/organizer of claim 21, further comprising ledges extending above said upper edge portions of said first and second side walls and alongside a bottom of a respective one of said compartments.

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23. The sorter/organizer of claim 21, wherein said first and second transverse walls are substantially parallel to said first and second side walls.

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24. The sorter/organizer of claim 21, wherein said first and second transverse walls connect the respective one of said first and second front wall portions to said rear wall.

25. The sorter/organizer of claim 21, further comprising a

substantially planar bottom wall arranged between said first and second transverse walls to define a bottom of said storage compartment.

5           26. The sorter/organizer of claim 21, wherein at least one of said first and second bottom walls includes an arcuate portion and a substantially flat or planar portion forward of said arcuate portion defining the bottom of at least one of said compartments whereby an object contacting said arcuate portion  
10 slides along said arcuate portion onto said substantially flat or planar portion.

          27. The sorter/organizer of claim 21, wherein each of said first and second bottom walls includes a plurality of bottom  
15 panels arranged at different heights and closure panels connecting adjacent ones of said bottom panels, each of said bottom panels defining a bottom support surface of a respective one of said compartments, said closure panels being substantially parallel to said front and rear walls.

20           28. The sorter/organizer of claim 21, further comprising reinforcing ribs arranged on said outer edges of said first and second front wall portions; said rear wall, said at least one first and second dividing walls and contiguous with one of said

first and second side walls such that said reinforcing ribs have a surface substantially coplanar with an outer surface of said one of said first and second side walls.